



NOAA FY 2000 Budget Request Fact Sheet

LANDS LEGACY INITIATIVE



Fisheries Habitat Restoration

NOAA is requesting an increase of \$23 million in FY 2000 to dramatically increase the geographic scope and rate at which on-the-ground fish habitat restoration is undertaken on regional and community levels in partnership with federal agencies, state and local governments, universities, and private organizations. Restoration projects will address the full range of habitats vital to NOAA's trust resources including wetlands, salt marshes, seagrass, mangroves, coral reefs and coastal rivers. NOAA's Fisheries Habitat Restoration request is a key component of the Administration's FY 2000 Lands Legacy Initiative, and complements other investments seeking to protect and restore our valuable ocean and coastal resources.



Duck Creek restoration site.

NOAA Budget

FY 2000
Change
\$M

National Ocean Service

Ocean Resource Conservation and Assessment

(Coastal Dredging and Restoration)

\$10

(Coral Reef Restoration)

\$10

Ocean & Coastal Management

(Coastal Zone Management Program)

\$32

(National Estuarine Research Reserves System)

\$ 3

(National Marine Sanctuaries)

\$12

National Marine Fisheries Service

Conservation and Management Operations

(Fisheries Habitat Restoration)

\$23

Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction Account

(National Estuarine Research Reserves System)

\$12

(National Marine Sanctuaries)

\$ 3

NOAA Lands Legacy Initiative - - Total \$105

Restoring Fisheries Habitat

1. Regional Habitat Restoration - Funding is requested to improve degraded habitats by implementing habitat restoration and acquisition on a regional or watershed basis. NOAA will focus on a suite of projects in coastal environments and implement those habitat actions that provide the most significant benefits to NOAA trust resources. Partnerships with regional institutions will leverage increased funding. Participation is anticipated by those watersheds that:

- 1) are part of established estuary programs (e.g. National Estuary Program and National Estuarine Research Reserves Systems),
- 2) are home to multiple federal endangered and/or threatened species,
- 3) have been identified as essential fish habitat by fishery management plans, or
- 4) are the sites of regional action by the NOAA Damage Assessment and Restoration Program.

Other opportunities will also be explored, including those associated with Special Area Management Plans, hydropower relicensing and water management.

Funds will be distributed by NOAA to cooperating governments and other partners to address priority restoration needs based on a proposal's merit, quality of existing restoration and regional habitat plans, and degree to which matching funds or in-kind resources can be leveraged to supplement NOAA funds.

The Importance of Our Coast

Coastal regions are home to 110 million people — a number expected to increase to 127 million by the year 2010. People love coastal areas for their beauty and depend on them for recreational and commercial uses. Estuaries and coastal wetlands provide essential habitat for 80-90% of the recreational fish catch and 75% of the commercial harvest. Human activities and development have caused the destruction of more than half of the estimated 215 million original acres of wetland. Restoration, conservation, and acquisition provide long-term defenses against the degradation of finfish and shellfish habitat within estuaries and other coastal areas.

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NOAA's Role

For over a decade NOAA has successfully implemented a wide range of habitat restorations through a variety of programs whose success and achievements have been limited only by available funding. In addition to regional and community based habitat restoration, NOAA's Damage Assessment and Restoration Program restores trust resources injured by hazardous material release, including oil. NOAA also participates as a Federal sponsor for wetland restoration projects in Louisiana under the authority of the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA). This extensive experience restoring diverse habitat types makes NOAA uniquely suited to implement this new initiative. The requested funds will allow NOAA to more fully address habitat degradation within the wide range of habitats vital to its trust resources, dramatically increasing the geographic scope and rate at which restoration efforts are undertaken.

2. Community-Based Restoration Program - Funding is requested to expand the NOAA Community-Based Restoration Program, which achieves habitat restoration through local projects that foster natural resource stewardship within communities. Funds will be used to rapidly increase the scope of this highly successful, systematic national effort to encourage partnerships with states, local governments, non-governmental organizations, business, industry and schools to carry out restorations of local importance. Seed money will be provided to catalyze cooperative restoration projects, and to leverage funding up to tenfold to produce significant on-the-ground restoration. Communities participating in habitat restoration ultimately monitor and maintain these restoration efforts, resulting in a heightened conservation ethic. NOAA will broaden its efforts to solicit and support restoration initiatives at a grass-roots level by using NOAA expertise and leveraging funding with in-kind and monetary support from local interests. The number of requests for habitat restoration assistance far exceeds the present funding capability and greatly restricts the Agency's ability to encourage community efforts to restore marine and anadromous fish habitats.



Mangrove restoration site.

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